

# Grand prize winner and youth finalists announced for DNREC's 2016 rain barrel art contests

**DOVER** – Rain barrels that won distinction from DNREC for the artists whose creativity went into them in the Division of Watershed Stewardship's Rain Barrel Painting Contest have been announced, and are now on display at the Delaware Agricultural Museum – preeminent among them this year's grand prize-winning entry in the adult division by Nathan Zimmerman.



“Early to Rise at Sundown,” the grand prize winner in this year's DNREC Rain Barrel Painting contest by artist Nathan Zimmerman.

DNREC sponsors the rain barrel painting contest and a youth competition annually to educate the community on the benefits of using rain barrels to reduce rainwater runoff and improve water quality. Twenty participants were chosen to give their artistic touch to the contest based on their applications, design ideas and site placements for their barrels. Individuals or teams chosen to participate in the contest each received a fully-assembled, primed 55-gallon plastic barrel, topcoat and bubble wrap; the artists supplied their own paint, brushes and other materials or tools. They were given five weeks to finish their artistry and submit final photographs

and information about their work, as well as a short biography of themselves.

Nathan Zimmerman's grand-prize winner, "Early to Rise at Sundown," depicting a barred owl perched over water (adjacent photo) will be on display at the DNREC building during the Delaware State Fair and finally will be in use at Woodburn, the Governor's Residence in Dover. Mr. Zimmerman, an artist from Milton, also provided narrative about his winning rain barrel: "Often heard caterwauling from the tree tops, the barred owl is a resident of treed swamps and mature forests and is the perfect embodiment of a watershed warrior. Whether while working at Trap Pond State Park or hunting along Bundicks Branch the barred owl has always put a smile on my face when the 'noise' starts. The background was inspired by the countless sunsets I've watched while hunting in the marshes along the Broadkill River."

Other finalists included:

- **Artist:** Diane Buckingham  
**Title:** "Holding the Key."  
**Description:** "My design illustrates the flow of water through all of earth's Biosystems, the interconnectedness and interdependency of all life on water, with man ultimately holding the key to its health or detriment."
- **Artist:** Lynn Patrice Farina  
**Title:** "Butterflies and Flowers"  
**Description:** "I painted my rain barrel depicting Delaware native plants and butterflies. I painted watering cans on the rain barrel to show how a rain barrel can be used to water plants in an economic and environmentally friendly way. Native flowers painted on the rain barrel include: Awned Meadow Beauty, Swamp Rose Mallow, Nodding Bur Marigold, Trumpet Creeper, Cardinal Flower and Showy Aster. Native butterflies painted on the rain barrel include: Viceroy, Kings Hairstreaks,

Clouded Sulpher, and Orangetips.

- **Artist:** Bruce McKinney

**Title:** "Sweetwater"

**Description:** "The title of this year's rain barrel 'Sweetwater' is a simplistic entry for what else? – a rain barrel. It represents the needs for humans to incorporate this system in your home or business for wildlife. According to the National Wildlife Federation, humans extract water from the ground and as a result, the water table may drop, damaging habitats miles away. Here it is represented by a raccoon in your empty rain barrel in search of water."

- **Artist:** Donna Reed

**Title:** "Playing in the Rain"

**Description:** "Playing in the Rain evokes the joys of childhood and an innocent appreciation of nature. Featuring two children splashing puddles in a field of flowers; this barrel was painted in the rain to help blend the colors and cause the drips to run down. Rain water was used to thin the paints. Eight rain poems were written by Wilson School students as part of a poetry unit and in support of our school garden."

In the youth division five finalists have been chosen from online voting, with the Grand Prize winner to be voted on and announced at the Delaware State Fair. Youth finalists included:

- **Delmarva Christian School** – (Sophia Birl, Savannah Stewart, Chloe Wilson)

**Title:** "Reign of the Sea"

**Description:** "The reason we chose an underwater design for our rain barrel is because we want to inspire people to help save our waterways."

- **Maclary Elementary** – 4th Grade (Alec Ciesinski, Owen Reazor, Alex Ozor)

**Title:** "United States of Water"

**Description:** “Our barrel symbolizes America using a collage of national symbols. We changed these images to show the importance of conserving water. The wings of the eagle, our national symbol, represent the American flag, and each of the fifty stars is represented as a water droplet. The Statue of Liberty, an American landmark, is holding a simple water bottle instead of a torch. We believe that rain barrels should be used nationwide.”

- **Maclary Elementary** – 4th Grade (Jordan Short, Katrina Endres, Ella Baldwin, Olivia Kessler)

**Title:** “Nature Preservers”

**Description:** “Our barrel represents nature’s beauty with and without water. What inspired us to come up with the theme of “Nature Preservers” is how we have the privilege of having almost unlimited water – or at least we think we do, but we don’t! The more water we use, the less water we have, and the less beautiful our environment becomes. So when we use rain barrels we are giving back to our community.”

- **Rachel Santos** – Phillip C. Showell Elementary

**Title:** “Mrs. Minion”

**Description:** “All of my friends talk about Minions. I know that everyone loves Minions, so that is why I drew Mrs. Minion.”

- **Kara Scarangella** – Saint Thomas More Academy

**Title:** Tiki – H2O Progenitor

**Description:** “My water barrel represents a Tiki Totem Pole showing a water god with the word ‘water’ within its mouth. This uses the Polynesian culture to show a Tiki – H2O progenitor (‘to bring forth’) of water for the people and to show how to use it in a responsible way. Inspiration used for this water barrel is the totem pole in Bethany.”

For more information about the rain barrel painting contests, including photos of the entries, please click [2016 Rain Barrel](#)

[Art Contest](#). For more information on the contests, please contact Sara Wozniak at [sara.wozniak@delaware.gov](mailto:sara.wozniak@delaware.gov) or 302-382-0335.

**What is a Rain Barrel?** A rain barrel is a container that collects and stores the water from roofs and downspouts for future uses such as watering lawns, gardens, and house plants; cleaning off gardening tools; and washing your car. Rain barrels help lower your water bills, particularly in the summer months by collecting thousands of gallons of water a year. Rain barrels are also important for our environment because they help reduce water pollution by decreasing the amount of stormwater runoff reaching our streams and rivers. An average rainfall of one inch within a 24-hour period can produce more than 700 gallons of water that run off a typical house. Such stormwater runoff picks up anything on the ground such as litter, excess fertilizer, pet waste, and motor oil, transporting it to storm drains that dump the untreated water directly into our waterways.

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